

## VISITORS' PERCEPTION OF CIREBON AS A TOURIST DESTINATION-BUILDING TO PROMOTE THE CITY

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**Abstract.** *Visitor's Perception of Cirebon As A Tourist Destination-Building To Promote The City.* The problem identified in this study is how visitors' perception and the image communication influenced the overall image of Cirebon as a tourist destination. This study was conducted by using structural equation modelling. The results of this study show that perception variable equation significantly affected the overall image variable, while the image communication variable did not significantly affect the overall image. On the other hand, the causal relationship equation shows that there is a significant relationship between the exogenous latent variable of perception and endogenous latent variable of Overall Image. While there is no relationship between exogenous latent variable of image Communication with endogenous variable of overall image. The result is expected to give recommendation to the local government to develop and promote tourism that at the end can put tourism to generate income for the city.

**Keywords:** perception, image communication, overall image, structural equation modelling.

**Abstrak.** *Persepsi Wisatawan Cirebon Sebagai Tujuan Wisata Untuk Mempromosikan Kota.* Identifikasi masalah yang diajukan dalam kajian ini ialah terkait persepsi wisatawan dan komunikasi gambaran dipengaruhi oleh gambaran umum kota Cirebon sebagai tujuan wisata. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) sebagai teknik analisisnya. Hasil yang didapatkan menunjukkan bahwa variabel persepsi memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap gambaran umum, sedangkan komunikasi gambaran tidak memiliki pengaruh terhadap gambaran umum. Di sisi lain, dari persamaan hubungan kausalitas menunjukkan bahwa terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara variabel endogen laten berupa persepsi terhadap variabel eksogen laten yang berupa gambaran umum. Serta tidak terdapat hubungan antara variabel eksogen laten komunikasi gambaran terhadap variabel endogen berupa gambaran umum. Hasil ini memberikan suatu rekomendasi kepada pemerintah daerah untuk mengembangkan dan mempromosikan pariwisata, dimana pada akhirnya dapat memberikan kontribusi pendapatan terhadap kota.

**Kata Kunci:** persepsi, komunikasi gambaran, gambaran umum, structural equation modelling

## INTRODUCTION

Cirebon is one of preferred tourist destinations in West Java, since it offers a wealth of culture, arts and history. Situated by the border of West and Central Java, *Cirebon is a meeting place of many different cultures a unique mix of Javanese, Sundanese, Islamic, Chinese and even Hindu cultures*. However, the rich and unique culture and arts that actually can be potential in developing tourism are not well managed and preserved. The local people and also the government do not aware of the existence of tourism within the community.

Cirebon is the city of palaces. In the city, the ancient palaces (kratons) of the Kasepuhan, Kanoman, Kacirebonan, and Keprabonan where the royal family are still living, now also serve as museums which are open to the public, exhibiting house ornaments, paintings, calligraphy and other art treasures of the courts. Cirebon is also known for its glass painting, traditional arts and distinct batik, now a flourishing industry which may be seen in the village of Trusmi. Another specialty this city can offer you is a wide range of seafood and many other traditional foods, probably the best in West Java.

Unfortunately, the rich cultural heritage, arts, and delicious cuisine of the city do not seem to be able to attract many tourists to come. Some of the people of Cirebon do not even realize that the city actually has a potency to be a tourist destination. As the city is developing, there are certain things missing from the city and the community lives within. The people have less awareness and pride of the existence and value of Cirebonese cultural heritage. It even worsens by the reluctance of the local government to deal with this situation and to find solution towards it. Whereas, one of the missions of the city states that Cirebon as the city of culture and tourism is expected to be able to actualize the tradition values and Cirebonese culture, to be commoditized as tourism product regionally and internationally.

It seems that the mission is only rhetoric. The local government, so far has not done any serious actions to deal with the condition of tourism in Cirebon. Cirebonese Kraton retainers expect that the local government will seriously put the tourism at the first place by at least subsidizing the maintenance cost of Kratons. The history that lives within the Kratons is not

merely a historical symbol. Nonetheless, it can be an asset for tourism. History can generate money, if only it is managed and preserved.

The current condition of tourism in Cirebon which is not well-developed might be caused by two main factors. The first is the less awareness of local community on the existence of tourism in their city and its benefits. The second is the lack of seriousness of the local government in promoting the city.

Cirebon needs to be investigated further in order to promote the city as a tourist destination. A destination image promotion model is proposed in this paper as an effort to solve the problem. The roles of some major factors such as image identification, image communication vehicles and image promotion tools are discussed. The study about the influence of visitors' perception and image communication on Cirebon as tourist destination is conducted. This study will focus on how image identification and communication are mutually influenced the overall image of Cirebon as a tourist destination.

Research will be conducted in Cirebon. The methodology used in quantitative by giving questionnaire to the visitors of the town with various socio demographic factors. The questions will be developed mainly asking about the visitors' perceptions about Cirebon as a tourist destination, the image promotion tools and image vehicles.

This research will not measure the competitiveness of the current tourism destinations and attractions by relating them with the visitors' image perception toward the current tourism attractions. The other important thing is that the research will not measure the success level of the existing tourism policies. The research only measures to what extent the visitors acknowledge and signify their perception of Cirebon and how the image communication of the city perceived by the visitors. The research will investigate the manner how the visitors perceive Cirebon as an interesting tourism destination. This research study is expected to create destination image for Cirebon as a tool to promote the city. This research main concerns are to identify the region's main attraction points from the visitors' perception as well as also those elements they consider being negative. What perceptions do the visitors have on Cirebon as a tourist destination? How is the image communication of Cirebon perceived

by visitors? Are perception and image communication mutually influenced the overall image of Cirebon? How to design a structural equation model in this research? Objective of the Study To know the visitors' perception about Cirebon; To know how the visitors perceived the image communication of Cirebon; To know the influence of perception and image communication on Cirebon as a tourist destination; and To know the design of structural equation model of this research. The purpose of this research is to investigate the influence of visitors' perception and image communication on Cirebon as a tourist destination and answer the research questions asked in this study.

The study will focus on the investigation of visitors' perception on Cirebon's destination image. The investigation is likely to be the key factor to build the destination image of Cirebon that at the end can be used to promote the city. Due to limitation of time and resource, the respondents of the research are limited only about 100 persons who have ever been to Cirebon. The result of the research is expected to give information and benefits to increasing the knowledge theoretically and practically as the implementation of several sciences learned during the study. Giving information about the current condition of tourism in Cirebon that can be used as recommendations in the marketing strategy to promote the city in the future. Moreover, the result of the study will give a perspective point of view for the local government that tourism can be an alternative source of income for the city. Giving information and knowledge about current condition of tourism in Cirebon and the influence of perception and image communication in building positive image of a city.

This flow of the thesis moves from the general and theoretical to the specific and empirical. This thesis contains six chapters, divided roughly into two parts, the theoretical basis of the research and the methodological basis which comprises chapter one to three and the result of the thesis which comprises chapter four to six. The first part deals with background of the study, theoretical, and methodological. Chapter two follows the introductory chapter. It establishes the theoretical underpinning this study and examines the previous study related to the issue discussed. Previous researches have been

conducted about destination image. The theoretical framework and previous researches lead direction to the writing of this thesis.

Xiang and Vogelsong (2002) defined destination image promotion as a strategy to enhance a destination's competitive position through the identification and promotion of its image. They added that destination image promotion is an important strategy in place marketing and promotion. They also quoted from Kotler et al. (1993) that destination image marketing is one of the four place marketing strategies (the other three are attraction marketing, infrastructure marketing, and people marketing). They further indicated that there are three image vehicles, which are slogan, theme, and positioning; visual symbols; and tourist events. There are several studies on place marketing introducing major image promotion tools, such as traditional advertisements (Li, 1999), promotion materials (Briggs, 1997), public relations (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998), attending hosting exhibitions, travel and tourism conventions (Ahmed, 1991), and the Internet (Wu, 2000). Xiang and Vogelsong (2002) concluded that most studies suggest that a major part of destinations' marketing efforts should be directed to the creation and management of a positive image. These studies try to identify image strengths and weaknesses of different destinations.

According to Pizam and Mansfeld (2000): "Perception has been defined as the process by which an individual receives, selects, organizes and interprets information to create a meaningful picture of the world." Every individual is different which means that also their perceptions of their surrounding environment differ from each other.

According to Reisinger and Turner (2003): "perceptions of tourists who had never experienced the product before (or had very limited experience of it), and whose perceptions are mostly created on a basis of the knowledge gained from promotion instead of first-hand experience, may differ from the perceptions of tourists who had experienced the product." (Pizam & Mansfeld 2000)

## **METHODS**

Much leisure and tourism research involves data collection, analysis and presentation of statistical information. The quantitative approach to research involves statistical analysis. It relies on numerical evidence to draw conclusion or hypotheses. To be sure of the reliability of the results it is often necessary to study relatively large numbers of people and to use computers to analyse the data. The data may be derived from questionnaire surveys, from observation involving counts, or from secondary sources. The qualitative approach to research is generally not concerned with numbers, it involves gathering a great deal of information about a small number of people rather than a limited amount of information about a large number of people (Veal, 2006).

The nature of this study is a quantitative causal research. In which, according to Peter M. Chisnall (1986), causal research conducts to establish cause – effect relationships among variables. The research will be based on consumer's perception about Cirebon and image communication. How the destination image and image communication affect one another in generating an overall image from tourists towards a destination.

According to Uma Sekaran (1992), a variable is anything that can take on differing or varying values. The values can differ at various times for the same object or person, or values can differ at the same time for objects or persons. There are dependent and independent variables. The dependent variable is the variable of primary interest to the researcher. The researcher's goal is to explain or predict the variability in the dependent variable. The researcher is interested in quantifying and measuring this variable, as well as the other variables that influence this variable. An independent variable is one that influences the dependent variable in either a positive or negative way. That is, when the independent variables are present, the dependent variables are also present, and with each unit of increase in the independent variable, there is an increase or decrease in the dependent variable also. In other words, the variance in the dependent variable is accounted for the independent variable.

In this research, there are 14 indicators measured or observed. The 13 indicator are exogenous variables, they are perception and image

communication, while the Endogenous variable is overall image from target market. A population may be a group of people, houses, records, legislators, and so on. The specific nature of the population depends on the purpose of investigation. The sampling frame should theoretically list every member of the population, but in reality this is rarely possible. When the sampling frame is reasonably complete and does not contain any systematic bias they are usually appropriated for the task. (Finn, Elliott-White & Walton, 2000).

Hair et.al, (1995) quoted by Ferdinand (2005) found that the appropriate sample is between 100-200 or called as *Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE)*. If the sample is too large for example more than 400, the methodology will be "very sensitive" so that the goodness fit measurement will be difficult to get. Hair et.al suggested that the minimum measurement for minimum sample is 5 observations for every estimated parameter. Therefore, if the parameter is 20, the minimum sample is 100.

The research have variables which is described in a model, as follows: Endogenous Variables of Overall Image is influenced by perception and image communication. The variables can be seen in the following figure by using *path* model. Hypothesis is the temporary answer to the research questions. The hypotheses are: *first*, Perception influences the overall image of visitors about Cirebon as tourist destination. *Second*, Image communication influences the overall image of visitors about Cirebon as tourist destination.

This study relies on both primary and secondary data. As suggested by Veal (2006), although a research project is based mainly on new information, it will also be necessary to make use other existing information – such as official government statistics or financial records from leisure or tourism facility or service. The means of collecting primary data including sampling data will be main concerns in the following sub chapters.

The questionnaires will be used as primary data by collecting demographic characteristics and the visitors' perception of Cirebon as a tourist destinations. The questionnaire is addressed to the visitors of Cirebon in multiple choice questions. The questionnaire uses Likert scale to indicate the respondents' agreements or disagreement with a proposition or the importance

they attach to a factor, using a standard set of responses (Veal, 2006). Responses to both Likert scale questions and attitude statements will be scored as indicated by the numeral symbols. In this study, '5' means strongly agree, '4' is agree, '3' is no opinion, '2' is disagree and '1' is strongly disagree. The secondary data are from literature study and Cirebon Tourism Department data, for example the number of visitors, number of tourist's attraction and the accommodation in the city. For the primary data the research instruments used are Questionnaire from the visitors of Cirebon and the data from Cirebon Tourism Department

In this research, the researcher uses more than one variable, and the analysis method is multivariate statistics. The measurement activity cannot be conducted directly, instead by using indicators reflected from the constructed measurement, which include perception, image communication, and overall image. The analysis uses Structural Equation Modeling-SEM. The software used is LISREL 8.50. According to Hair, et.al (1995) quoted by Ferdinand (2005), there are seven steps in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

## **DISCUSSION**

Development is occurring at a high rate with Indonesian and foreign investment increasing by the mushrooming of industry built in the rural area of the town. Cirebon is an important transportation center for goods to and from Jakarta, as well as a transit town between west Java and Central Java, where trucks and buses pass by the busy major northern east-west highway. Nevertheless, life in Cirebon retains much of its charm, with bicycle rickshaws (becaks) are still crowding its wide tree lined streets. There are a number of special artistic and cultural features of the town, including its unique glass painting and special batik cloth. Both of these are characterized by motifs reflecting the traditions of the kratons, or former palaces of the sultanate of Cirebon, which reached its golden-age in the fifteenth century.

The number of art forms in the small area of Cirebon is truly amazing. According to Richard North (2007) as quoted from Cirebon scholar Matthew Isaac Cohen's 2005 article *The Arts of Cirebon*, "...the sheer amount of artistic



activity in Cirebon is rivaled in Indonesia only by Bali – all the more remarkable as Cirebon (unlike Bali) has little tourist industry to speak of.”

Cirebon has its own unique classical architecture, batik textile, woodcarving, reverse glass painting traditions, and music includes gamelan and ensembles. Cirebon is also known for its ancient *topeng* - masked dance tradition, as well as two kinds of Puppet Theater: the *wayang kulit* shadow puppets, and the *wayang golek* rod puppets.

The first popular cultural heritage of Cirebon that is going to be described in details is batik. Batik represents the indivisible ancestor heritage from Indonesian culture. Batik Cirebon which is well-known called as batik Trusmi is very distinct. Even though batik Trusmi is not as so famous as batik Jogja and Pekalongan, the quality of batik Trusmi which has the motif of *mega mendung* (layer of clouds) has been able to compete with batik Jogja and Pekalongan. The expansion of batik business which has reached abroad will guarantee batik Trusmi in economy contribution of the local people and also can be a symbol that introduces Cirebon in Indonesia and abroad.

The second is glass painting, an art form using glass as a media. According to Rafan S. Hasyim, a glass painter from Cirebon, glass painting was started to develop in the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century until the early of 20<sup>th</sup> century. He added that Cirebon glass painting is developing not only as aesthetical function but also as a local cultural tradition as well as an expression media for the painter. This reality which then supports the existence of Cirebon glass painting. The themes painted on Cirebon glass painting are calligraphy, wayang, batik (*mega mendung* motif is also used as it is in batik Trusmi) and scenery.

Next is performing art that includes masked dance, Cirebonese traditional music gamelan and ensembles, and Puppet Theater. These performing arts are religious mystical and sometimes magical. Masked dance performance, for example, it indeed has similarities with Central Java masked dance, but Cirebonese masked dance has magical function for the sake of community's safety. The Cirebonese gamelan music is usually played to accompany masked dance. The music has its own melody and songs. It has two kinds of gamelan: *prawa* and *pelog*; plus three archaic “*proto gamelan*”

ensembles: *gong renteng*, *denggung*, and *gong sekati*. The wayang golek rod puppets, sometimes called wayang cepak to differentiate it from the south central Javanese and Sundanese wayang golek traditions. The Cirebonese wayang golek was created by Sunan Kalijaga to balance *wayang kulit*, a tradition of Hindu Java. Cirebonese wayang golek usually takes stories of Islam prophets' histories, *wali songo* and other Islamic characters. This is due to the fact that the purpose of the performance was definitely to spread Islam.

As a coastal city, Cirebon's main industry is fishery. Its products include *terasi* (shrimp paste), shrimp crackers and salted fish. Cirebon is known for local foods, such as: *Nasi jamblang* (bowls of dishes to accompany rice served on teak leaves), *Nasi lengko* (rice mixed with bean sprouts, fried tofu and fermented soybean cake), *Empal gentong* (soup - a kind of curry with boiled cow intestine), *tahu gejrot* (Fried tofu which is cut into small pieces and placed on a small dish made of red soil and with red sugar topping), etc. Many visitors are intentionally come to Cirebon to eat the cuisine.

The visual impact of Cirebon's ancient kraton (royal courts) architecture is amazing. It seems that it can take us stepped back in time. With their dramatic split gates and numerous ornamentally carved pagoda-like pavilions surrounded by red brick walls with inset Ming Dynasty Chinese plates, the Cirebon kratons seem much closer to colorful Balinese Hindu temples than to the Muslim palaces of central Java. This is not surprising since they date back to the last days of Java's Hindu era in the 1400's. In fact, scholars believe Cirebon's royal courts are a kind of "missing link" to Java's Hindu past.

Since ancient times the rural villages surrounding Cirebon have been the living centers of the traditional arts, a fact that is still very true today. In addition, as quoted by Richard North, Cohen mentions in his 2002 article Multiculturalism and Performance in Colonial Cirebon, "There is evidence demonstrating that the kraton (royal courts) were important centers for the refined arts in the past". In the last century or so the artistic activities of the Cirebon palaces decreased, due in part to "their desperate financial straits." Recently however, all three of Cirebon's kraton have once again become active in the perpetuation of Cirebon arts.

Kraton Kasepuhan is generally considered the oldest of Cirebon's three palaces located at the site of the 15th century Pakung Wati, the palace of Cirebon's first sultan, Sunan Gunung Jati. The palace maintains an impressive museum displaying the sultans' iconic royal carriages (*kereta kencana*), heirloom keris daggers, dazzling woodcarvings, and several gamelan orchestras, the most important of which, the *Gong Sekati*, or *Sekaten* is played twice a year in one of the numerous ancient Javanese pavilions on the palace grounds. The Yayasan Keraton Kasepuhan organization under P.R. Arief Natadiningrat has embarked on various programs to help promote and preserve Cirebonese cultural heritage, including hosting Cirebonese participants in the periodic national Kraton Festival. The event joined by 23 royal courts from all over Indonesia was meant to act as a medium of preserving traditional values and cultural heritage for historical and educational reasons.

Next, Kraton Kanoman is walking distance from Kasepuhan and boasts equal claims to antiquity and cultural importance. Along with its ancient Hindu-Javanese pavilions and gateways, Kanoman too has a museum displaying ancient Cirebon carriages, keris and gamelan, although their venerable Gong Sekati orchestra is not on public display. Kraton Kaprabonan was originally the residence of Prince Raja Adipati Kaprabonan, founded in 1702. Its function was to spread the teaching of Islam especially to the descendants of the royal family.

Finally, Kraton Kacirebonan is the smallest and youngest of the Cirebon four royal courts. It has really taken the lead in opening up and preserving Cirebon's previously restricted royal cultural treasures. The late Pangeran Haji Yusuf Dendabrata was a virtual renaissance man of Cirebon culture. In addition to being the *Lurah Seni* (Arts Director) and Patih (second in command to the Sultan) of his palace, Elang Yusuf was personally active in the revival of the Cirebon arts of gamelan music, traditional dance, wood carving, glass painting, batik cloth, Cirebon architecture, and shadow puppet theater, performing as *dalang* (puppet master) in the Kacirebonan Palace shortly before his death in 2000 (Richard North, 2007).

One of the missions of Cirebon is as the city of culture and tourism is expected to be able to actualize the tradition values and Cirebonese culture, to be commoditized as tourism product regionally and internationally. In addition, the government concerned with urban redevelopment and historic preservation of this historic district. It seems the legal means, either The Monument Art 1990 at national level and *Perda* no.6 1988 applied by the local government of Cirebon, are in fact still insufficient and inapplicable to control the development of Kraton district, particularly in preservation and conservation programs. The Town Council through the Urban Design Guidelines, attempts to preserve some of the historic buildings, and provides guidelines for new development in Kraton district. However, these guidelines employed only a little public participation approach in the process.

According to gender, the respondents' profile involved in this research is 100 persons which are divided into 49 female respondents and 51 male respondents. Marital status, the respondents who married are 53 persons, while those who are not married is 47 persons. According to education background, the respondents who are High School graduates are 23 persons, those who are Diploma graduates are 15 persons, those who are Bachelor Degree graduates are 37 persons, while the post graduates are 25 persons.

The structural equation is an analysis that combines several aspects in path analysis and confirmatory factor analysis to estimate several equations simultaneously. There are seven steps in using the Structural Equation Model. The steps have been discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter will discuss the result and the data analysis using the Structural Equation Model. The Estimates model is seen from the standardized solution model, the estimates is considered broken, if Variant error is negative and The standardized value is more than 1.00

In this research, the error value from each dimension from every variable has a positive value, so that the model of this research has fulfilled the criteria standard which has been determined in SEM method. The standardized value is considered has fulfilled the SEM criteria as there is none of the value is more than 1.00.

This research is conducted to know whether the proposed model in path diagram (theoretical model) is fit with the data. The evaluation towards the model's works is conducted by overall test. In other words, this research is to test the model of perception and image communication towards the overall image. The structural relationship that is examined in this research assumed that the perception has a positive influence towards the overall image. However, the image communication does not have a significant influence towards the overall image.

The analysis result towards the Structural Equation Model shows Degrees of Freedom = 51; *Chi-Square* = 143.56; Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.81; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.14; Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.70; Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.92; Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI) = 0.53. Referring to the result about the standard measurement of Goodness of Fit (GOF), the model can be considered fit if the theoretical model is fit with the data. However, that is not a must, if there is one value does not fulfill the requirement while the others fulfilled the requirement, the model is considered fit.

In order to know the relationship between the latent variables with the indicators, the *t* value must be examined from the loading factors or the coefficients in the model. The *t* value of a loading factor or a high coefficient is the proof that the variables are measured or the factors represented the constructs. The *t* value of every loading factor must be higher than critical value of 1.96 with the significant level of 0.05 or 2.58 for the significant level of 0.01.

In this research, the *t* critical which is used is 1.96. The *t* value is higher than the critical value. It is assumed that the variables have significant relationship with the construct indicators. In addition, the result is used as the verification of the relationship among variables and the defined indicators.

In the model, it shows that the dimensions of perception variables are as follows, the infrastructure, the *t* value = 10.79, the tourism infrastructure, the *t* value = 8.76, the tourism activities the *t* value = 9.66, the culture and arts the *t* value = 9.68, the city environment the *t* value = 10.08, the safety and security the *t* value = 10.46. The dimensions of image communication variables are as

follows, the image the  $t$  value = 7.90, the symbol the  $t$  value = 11.16, the festival the  $t$  value = 10.64, but the dimension of the internet from the image communication variables is not significant with the  $t$  value = 1.16. The dimensions of overall image variables of positive image is not significant, while the negative image have a significant  $t$  value = 6.42.

The Measurement Fit Model can be seen from standardized solution model. The loading values on the standardized solution model for each variable are as follows: (1) Perception:  $0.87 + 0.76 + 0.81 + 0.81 + 0.83 + 0.85 = 4.93$ , (2) Image Communication:  $0.71 + 0.90 + 0.87 + 0.12 = 2.6$ , (3) Overall Image:  $0.66 + 0.81 = 1.47$ . While the error value and epsilon from the standardized loading for each of the latent variable are as follows: (1) Perception:  $0.25 + 0.43 + 0.34 + 0.35 + 0.31 + 0.27 = 1.95$ , (2) Image Communication:  $0.49 + 0.19 + 0.23 + 0.99 = 1.9$ , (3) Overall Image:  $0.56 + 0.34 = 0.9$ .

The square values of standardized latent variables are: (1) Perception:  $0.87^2 + 0.76^2 + 0.81^2 + 0.81^2 + 0.83^2 + 0.85^2 = 3.37$ , (2) Image Communication:  $0.71^2 + 0.90^2 + 0.87^2 + 0.12^2 = 2.07$ , (3) Overall Image:  $0.66^2 + 0.81^2 = 1.08$ . From the calculation of *construct reliability* and *variance extracted*, shown that the results fulfill the standard of 0.50 for *construct reliability* and *variance extracted* (Bachruddin, et.al, 2003).

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In this research, the  $t$  critical which is used is 1.96. The  $t$  value is higher than the critical value. It is assumed that the variables have significant relationship with the construct indicators. In addition, the result is used as the verification of the correlation among variables and the defined indicators.

The research model figure shows that there is one loading factor (internet) has a value of 1.16 which is less than 1.96. It means that the indicator of internet does not have a significant influence towards the image

communication. While the parameter gamma is - 1.39, it means that relationship between image communication variables with the overall image variables is not significant. Whereas the perception variables has a significant relationship with the overall image variables, as it can be seen from the parameter value among beta is 8.01.

The perception variable has six indicators, they are: public infrastructure; tourism infrastructure; tourism activities and recreation; culture, history and arts; city environment; safety and security.

The structural equation is:

$$\text{PERCEPTI} = 0.79*\text{INFRA} + 0.70*\text{INPAR} + 0.80*\text{AKTIF} + 0.69*\text{BUDSEN} + 0.76*\text{LIKOT} + 0.50*\text{AMAN}, \text{Errorvar.} = 0.26, R^2 = 0.95$$

The indicators are considered valid as the coefficient regression is  $\geq 0.5$ . It can be concluded that among the indicators have significant influence to the perception variable.

The image communication variable has four indicators, they are: image and slogan of Cirebon; visual symbol of Cirebon, Cirebonese tourism festival and arts; internet. The structural equation is:

$$\text{IMAGCOM} = 0.68*\text{CITRA} + 0.97*\text{SIMBOL} + 0.96*\text{FEST} + 0.49*\text{INTERNET}, \text{Errorvar.} = 0.35, R^2 = 0.88$$

Three indicators are considered valid as the coefficient regression is  $\geq 0.5$ . However there is one indicator (internet) which has value  $\leq 0.5$ . It can be concluded that the three indicators have significant influence to the image communication variable. Whereas the internet indicator does not have significant influence towards the image communication variable.

The overall mage variable has two indicators, positive image and negative image. The structural equation is:

$$\text{OVERALL} = 1.03*\text{IMAGPOS} + 0.99*\text{IMAGNEG}, \text{Errorvar.} = 0.019, R^2 = 0.99$$

The objective of this research is finding out whether the overall image variable is influenced by perception and image communication variables. After conducting the structural equation method, the result can be seen in a structural equation below:

$$\text{OVERALL} = 0.55*\text{PERCEPTI} + 0.45*\text{IMAGCOM}, \text{Errorvar.} = 0.81, R^2 = 0.42$$

It can be concluded that perception has significant influence to overall image as the coefficient regression is  $\geq 0.5$ . Whereas the image communication does not have significant influence to the overall image as the coefficient regression is  $\leq 0.5$ .

The second model can be considered *fit* because the values are fit with the required standard. After the research has been conducted, it can be found that perceptions of the visitors have significant influence to the overall image of Cirebon. The first variable of the research; perception has 6 (six) indicators. Referring to the Standardized Solution Model, the public infrastructure is the most dominant indicator in the perception variable with the loading factor of 0.87. It means that the visitors positively perceived the infrastructure in Cirebon. Whereas, the tourism infrastructure has the least loading factor of 0.76. It can be assumed that the tourism infrastructure in Cirebon has not fully facilitated the visitors. Therefore, the local government should take this into account that the development of tourism infrastructure have to be improved. The local government can start to increase the number of hotel, accommodation, and entertainment center. Moreover, the access to the tourist destination must be improved so that the visitors can go there easily. In additional, the local government has to provide the information of tourism both in the tourist site and the tourist information office.

The second variable is image communication. The first sub-variable is image vehicle selection which consists of three indicators. The most dominant indicator is symbol with the loading factor of 0.90, it can be assumed that the visitors are familiar with the symbol represent the city. Cirebon is well-known with the historical building like Kraton Keraton Kasepuhan, Kanoman, Keprabonan and Kacirebonan; Mesjid Agung Kasepuhan; Mesjid Merah; and Sunyaragi Cave. The visitors are also familiar with the Cirebonese traditional culinary and Batik Trusmi Cirebon with mega mending motif. The least dominant indicator is the symbol of Cirebon as the city of shrimp and Religious Leader, as the loading factor is 0.71. The second sub-variable, the image promotion tool is the internet. By only having 0.12 loading factor value, the indicator of the internet as the promotion tool is not significant. It can be



asumed that the tourism of Cirebon has not well promoted. The local government is recommended to start promoting the tourism more seriously and continuously. The promotion can be done by using the traditional advertisement like television, radio, magazine and newspaper. The media promotion from the tourism and culture board of Kota Cirebon can be made by providing brochure, tourism map and also video or CD-Room. The most updated promotion tool is by using the internet. The local government can promote the tourism by publishing the latest information about the tourist destinations, the accommodation, and other supported tourism facilities in their official website.

## CONCLUSION

The indicators of overall image variable are positive image and negative image. The positive image has a loading factor of 0.66. The visitors perceived positively that Cirebon has interesting tourist attractions like pilgrimage tourism, culture and culinary. Moreover, Cirebon has a rich history and arts. The negative image has a loading factor of 0.81. The visitors consider Cirebon as a boring city and has less options of shopping center. The result can be interpreted that the city is positively perceived by the visitors of having interesting tourist attraction and rich culture and arts. However, the result of a boring city and less shopping center. The local government is recommended to create more interesting tourist attractions. The available tourist attraction like Kraton can be used as an exhibition place or culture and arts performance. The tourists not only visit the historical building of Kraton but also enjoy the culture and arts performance. The local government have to provide more places for the visitors to go shopping as now shopping has become of one the tourism activities and reasons of people to visit a destination.

The influence of perception and image communication variables on the overall image can be seen from the gamma value. The influence of perception on the overall image is significant as it has gamma value of 1.09. While the image communication is not significantly influenced the overall image, as it has gamma value of - 0.24. It can be interpreted that the image communication of

Cirebon has not well perceived by the visitors. The local government must do harder and more serious efforts on promoting the tourism the city.

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